

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0612

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 7398

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: (OVIP) PFOR, JA, SN, CH, UR, XE

SUBJ: LEE KUAN YEW'S VISIT TO JAPAN: IMPLICATIONS FOR JAPAN'S
AND ASEAN NATIONS' RELATIONS WITH PRC

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

SUMMARY: DURING MAY 20-25 VISIT TO JAPAN, SINGAPORE PM LEE KUAN
YEW URGED JAPANESE TO INVEST IN NON-COMMUNIST NATIONS OF SE
ASIA TO BUILD ECONOMIES WHICH CAN RESIST INSURGENCIES. LEE EXP-
RESSED CONFIDENCE IN US BUT ASSERTED THAT ANY SE ASIAN NATION
WHICH LEANED TOWARD MOSCOW RISKED AROUSING CHINESE SUPPORT FOR
INSURGENCIES. TO COUNTER SOVIETS, LEE ADVOCATED SE ASIAN AND
JAPANESE EFFORTS TO STRENGTHEN CHINA'S INFLUENCE IN THE AREA.
LEE'S CONFIDENCE REASSURED THE JAPANESE AND IS LIKELY TO ELICIT
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SYMPATHETIC RESPONSE TO HIS REQUESTS FOR ECONOMIC SUPPORT. HIS

VIEWS ON STRENGTHENING THE CHINESE HAND FELL ON ATTENTIVE EARS IN THE FOREIGN OFFICE, WHERE HIS ANALYSIS HAS SOME SUPPORT. END SUMMARY.

1. DURING MAY 20-25 VISIT TO JAPAN ENROUTE HOME FROM JAMAICA AND US, SINGAPORE PREMIER LEE KUAN YEW FORCEFULLY URGED JAPANESE LEADERS TO INCREASE IMPORTS FROM AND INVESTMENT IN ASEAN COUNTRIES. FONOFF SECOND SE ASIA DIVDIR HASEGAWA AND SINGAPORE POLICOUNS ALI TOLD EMBASSY THAT IN MEETINGS WITH PM MIKI, FONMIN MIYAZAWA, FINMIN OHIRA, MITI MIN KOMOTO AND WITH PRESS, LEE STRESSED THAT JAPANESE INVESTMENT AND TRADE WERE NEEDED TO HELP NON-COMMUNIST COUNTRIES RECOVER FROM OIL CRISIS AND COPE WITH COMMUNIST TAKEOVERS IN INDOCHINA. LEE SAID STRONG ECONOMIES AND JOBS WOULD REDUCE NUMBER OF RECRUITS FOR INSURGENCIES. ALI TOLD US LEE ALSO BLUNTLY WARNED JAPANESE THAT MALACCA STRAITS' NATIONS SHOULD BE HELPED ECONOMICALLY SO AS TO AVOID COMMUNIST TAKEOVER OF STRAITS VITAL TO JAPAN'S TRADE ROUTES. JAPANESE RESPONDED WITH PROMISE TO LLK INTO PROGRESS ON JOINT SUMITOMO-GOS PETRO-CHEMICAL COMPLEX, A PROJECT HIGHLY PRIZED BY LEE. COMMENTING ON SINGAPORE'S FUTURE RELATIONS WITH INDOCHINA, LEE SAID NON-COMMUNIST AND SOCIALIST NATIONS SHOULD NORMALIZE RELATIONS BUT THIS WOULD TAKE TIME.

2. LEE TOLD JAPANESE LEADERS AND PRESS THAT US HAD NOT LOST CREDIBILITY BUT HAD LOST MILITARY INFLUENCE. SE ASIAN LEADERS ARE, ACCORDING TO LEE, CONCERNED ABOUT POSSIBLE SINO-SOVIET RIVALRY IN AREA. LEE DESCRIBED TO JAPANESE THE TRIANGULAR RELATIONSHIP AMONG CHINA, USSR, AND US IN SE ASIA, STRESSING THAT CHINA WAS WEAK SIDE OF TRIANGLE. LEE COMMENTED THAT ANY SE ASIAN NATION WOULD INVITE STEPPED-UP INSURGENCY SHOULD IT LEAN TOWARD THE SOVIET UNION AS OPPOSED TO LEANING TOWARD CHINA, SINCE CHINA WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY WANT TO UNDERMINE ANY NON-COMMUNIST GOVERNMENT WITH CLOSE TIES TO MOSCOW.

3. FRIENDLY JOURNALIST, HIRANO OF YOMIURI, RELAYED TO US SUBSTANCE OF CONVERSATION HE HELD WITH VICE FONMIN TOGO, WHO ATTENDED LEE'S MEETINGS WITH PM MIKI AND FONMIN MIYAZAWA. TOGO TOLD HIRANO THAT LEE SAID ASEAN STATES AND JAPAN SHOULD HELP STRENGTHEN CHINA'S INFLUENCE IN SE ASIA TO OFFSET SOVIET'S
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ADVANTAGES DERIVING FROM ITS MILITARY AND ECONOMIC STRENGTH. TOGO ADDED THAT LEE'S ANALYSIS OF ASIAN SITUATION WAS "VERY INTERESTING AND VERY USEFUL TO JAPAN". HIRANO FELT THAT TOGO'S COMMENT WAS SIGNIFICANT, IMPLYING THAT THE VICE FONMIN WAS RETHINKING THE FIRM DIPLOMATIC STANCE HE HIMSELF HAS ADOPTED IN NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE CHINESE ON THE PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP TREATY. HIRANO ADDED THAT A NUMBER OF EXPERTS IN THE FONOFF NOW WONDER IF THE GOJ NEGOTIATING TACTICS WITH PEKING WERE NOT WRONG.

4. COMMENT: LEE'S CONFIDENT POSTURE AND TESTIMONY TO CONTINUED AMERICAN CREDIBILITY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA WAS REASSURING TO THE JAPANESE. HIS APPEALS FOR JAPANESE INVESTMENT WILL BE GIVEN SYMPATHETIC CONSIDERATION. HIS ANALYSIS OF THE NEED TO STRENGTHEN THE CHINESE HAND APPEALS TO MANY OFFICIALS, BOTH INSIDE THE FOREIGN OFFICE AND OUT, WHO BELIEVE THAT ANY INCREASE IN SOVIET POWER AT THE EXPENSE OF THE UNITED STATES IS DETRIMENTAL TO JAPAN'S SECURITY BUT CAN IN PART BE COUNTERED BY JAPANESE MOVES TOWARD THE PRC.
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